HARAMBEE FLAME

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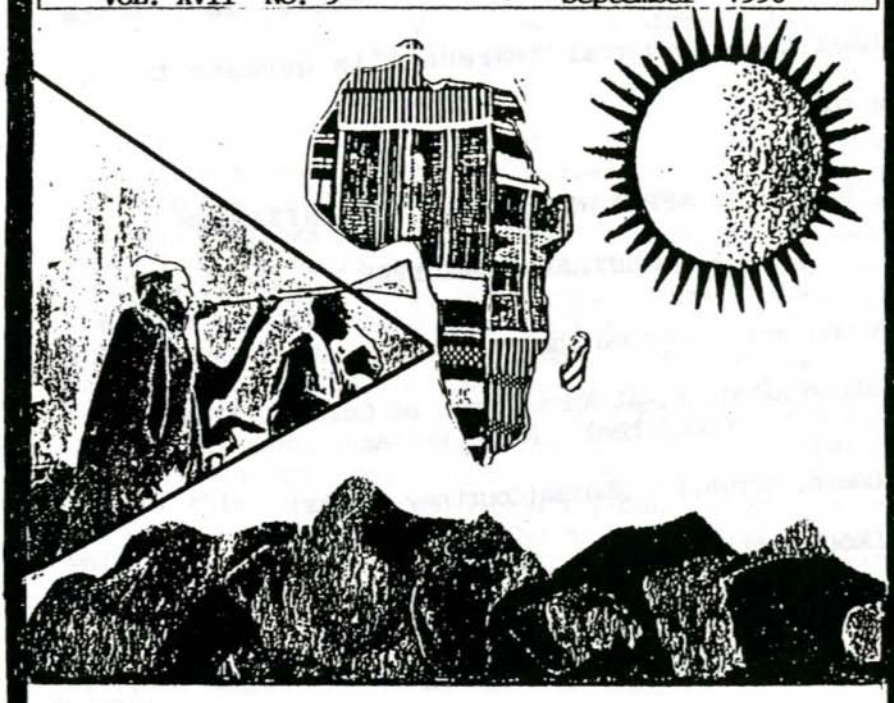

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right, rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

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GUEST COMMENTARY

In the past two decades, there has been an increase in the use of the term and discourse about the concept of "Afrocentricity." But definitions given for the term are often unclear. Commonly, what we hear is something to the effect of: "It's the study of African/African American history, you know, and stuff like that." No, my Brothers and Sisters, it is not just "stuff like that." Afrocentricity is more than just the study of places, dates, and events. It is the study of classical African cultures, ethics, philosophy, and the psychology of a people--African people.

Afrocentricity is more than just study. It is the developing and maintaining of an African-centered view of the world, based on the knowledge and understanding of African world history. For example, being fortified with an Afrocentric education, one would know that the columns that we see in front of the White House, while copied from the Greeks' Corinthian columns, have their origins in the columns found in Wasat(modern-day Thebes or Luxor) along the Hapi(Nile) Valley. One would know that the Greeks learned the technical skills to build their replicas from African priests and sages. Moreover, one would be aware of the fact that it was Benjamin Bannaker, an African, who designed the lay-out for this nation's capitol--a lay-out patterned after the great city of Ipet Isut("The Most Select of Places"), which is an ancient city in Kemet(today, called "Egypt"). The temples of Ipet Isut have been standing there in Africa for over 5000 years and are the sight of the first recorded university in the world, which was established around 3000 B.C.(See George G.M. James' STOLEN LEGACY.)

Afrocentricity is the African worldview that Jacob Carruthers lays out in his work, ESSAYS ON ANCIENT EGYPT, in which he states, on page 44: "The establishment of a truly African worldview requires not only that we build it in the name of Africans but that we build it upon the foundation of African heritage." Further, on page 56, while addressing the issue of the moral fibers of the African worldview, he points out: "The Kemite principle of the universal order is **Maat**. Maat is more often encountered in its ethical context, but as a conceptualization, it transcends the bounds of human interaction and becomes the foundation for cosmic

direction..." Maat is truth, justice, rightness, order, balance, propriety and reciprocity. Moreover, Maat is, in reality, the sum of the laws that govern nature and of the causes from which they flow. Nothing is arbitrary. Maat is the perfect concordance: she is equity and truth. Therefore, Maat is the helm and hull of Afrocentricity. (For further insight, we can consult Molefi Asante's KEMET, AFROCENTRICITY AND KNOWLEDGE.)

When first being exposed to this concept, I had a hard time, due mainly to my lack of knowledge of Africa and--This might sound funny--just who African people were. Realizing now that the "educational" system in Amerikkka was out to destroy my African mind, by "educating" me away from my Africanness and Africa, I understand why it was hard for me to accept that Africa was the home and birth place of humanity and that African people were the first people on the planet. Until I read what Cheikh Anta Diop wrote in his book, CIVILIZATION OR BARBARISM, it can be said that I was blind, or nearly so. Consider what he says on page 11 of that work: "All other races derived from the Black race by a more or less direct filiation, and the other continents were populated from Africa at the Homo Erectus and Homo Sapien stages, 150,000 years ago. The old theory that Blacks come from somewhere else are now invalid..." With the help of this multi-genius, I am no longer ashamed of Africa, the "dark, savage continent," as it was described to me by the school system. In fact, Europeans still teach African children of an Africa with a "primitive" history and culture.

It is crucial that we realize that Afrocentricity is an operation that is out to set the record straight concerning the African contributions to human civilization and to demonstrate the debt the world--especially, Europe--owes Africa through Kemet("Egypt"). Secondly, we should understand that Afrocentricity provides a paradigm for cultural thought and practice, which not only lays the basis for a new approach toward and insight into the human sciences, but also lays the basis for the reinvigoration and expansion of African culture. In a word, it will provide an indispensible foundation upon which we can raise our cultural future as African people and as a world community. Afrocentricity, then, is "Pan-Africanism, all African people

operating under one nation."

Clarifying further, Afrocentricity is the study of classical African, modern African, and African-American history, the history of African people of the diaspora--wherever African people have been and/or are today, be it South America, the Caribbean islands, Melanesian islands, China, Japan, and elsewhere. And as Cheikh Anta Diop says: "The study of Black Africa will not be complete without the study of the acculturation of the white man in an African milieu..." In fact, when we read the works of this Afrocentric pioneer and find things like: The history of Black Africa will remain suspended in air and cannot be written correctly until historians dare connect it with the history of Egypt," we can clearly see the importance of serious study, not only by African historians, but by African people in general.

In the introduction of Mr. Diop's THE AFRICAN ORIGIN OF CIVILIZATION: MYTH OR REALITY, we find on page 14, the following: "...The Black world is the very initiator of the 'western' civilization flaunted before our eyes today. Pythagorean mathematics, the theory of the four elements of Thales of Miletus, Epicurean materialism, Platonic idealism, Judaism, Islam and modern science are rooted in Egyptian cosmogony and science..."

Now my question to you is: Is Afrocentricity just the study of African/African-American history and "stuff like that"? Hardly. It is a consciousness that develops from hard concrete facts that one uncovers concerning the ethos of African people. As Count Volney, a European, states in his book, THE RUINS OF EMPIRES, "Just think that this race of Black Men, today our slaves and the object of our scorn, is the very race to which we owe our arts, sciences, and even the use of speech..." If it weren't for Afrocentricity, many of us wouldn't know that it is we, the Black Man(Ptah) and the Black Woman(Neith), whom the Europeans are worshipping and begging for forgiveness when they pray to God for salvation.

Hotep(Peace)!

Iemhotep Sa Ra/Franklin Norman

COMMENTARY

As of this writing, it has been about a week since the death of Tupac Shakur. His life and death have been well-hyped in the media, getting coverage on "Geraldo," "Jenny Jones," tabloid t.v. shows, news programs, etc. We've been witness to a variety of supposed "experts" speculating as to who might have killed Tupac(May his spirit be at peace in the realm of the ancestors) and why. We've heard an assortment of opinions and judgements about what kind of person Tupac was and what kind of "artist," etc. And, of course, his death has been exploited by those who have an anti-rap, or/and anti-gangsta rap, agenda.

Understandably, some African men and women, realizing that much of the Caucasian-led attack on rap is essentially a veiled attack on African people and young African **males** in particular, have jumped to the defense of gangsta rappers. In defending them, some have pointed to the Caucasian big shots of the music industry as the main culprits responsible for rap lyrics that often devalue African life, promote disrespect for African girls and women, glamourize conspicuous material consumption, and otherwise contribute to our continued mental and psychological enslavement. And there is no question that those who award the recording contracts have much responsibility for determining the kinds of products they put out.

But if an African criminal suspect falsely points the finger of guilt at a Brother or Sister to collect some reward money, it isn't only the police, who offered the money, who have responsibility in the act of betrayal. The Judas who accepted the money has to carry weight. If an African politician sells out his or her community to Caucasian political or financial big shots, is he or she any less of a traitor to his or her people because it was a Caucasian's hand out of which the money came?

Some of us have justifiably made the point that it is unfair for gangsta rap to be singled out for the violence, mutual African self-hatred, and disrespect of women that much of it glorifies and/or promotes while t.v. programs, movies, and other media forms almost totally controlled by Caucasians go relatively ignored. But the question has to be asked:

(Cont. on page 15)

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, etc. Please enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Drugs: From The C.I.A. To Us

"According to a series of groundbreaking reports by the San Jose Mercury News, for the better part of a decade, a San Francisco Bay Area drug ring, comprised of CIA and U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency agents and informants, sold tons of cocaine to the Crips and Bloods street gangs of Los Angeles.

"Millions of dollars in drug profits were then funneled to the Fuerza Democratica Nicaraguense(Nicaraguan Democratic Force), the largest of several anti-Communists commonly called the Contras...

"This CIA-backed drug network opened the first pipeline between Columbia's cocaine cartels and the Black neighborhoods of Compton and Los Angeles, according to the Mercury News.

"In time, the cocaine that flooded Los Angeles helped spark a 'crack explosion' in urban America and provided the cash and connections needed for Los Angeles' gangs to buy Uzi submachine guns, AK-47 rifles, and other assault weapons that would fuel deadly gang turf wars, drive-by shootings, murders and robberies...

"Although the Mercury News details the activities of numerous Nicaraguan and American informants and ties involved in the drug-gun trade, three men are cited as key players: Norwin Meneses, a Nicaraguan smuggler and FDN boss; Danilo Blandon, a cocaine supplier, top FDN civilian leader in California, and DEA informant; and Ricky Donnell Ross, a South Central Los Angeles high school drop out and drug trafficker of mythic proportions, who was Mr. Blandon's biggest customer.

"According to the Mercury News article, for the better part of a decade, 'Freeway Rick', as he was nicknamed, was unaware of his suppliers' military and political connections.

"But together, the trio was directly and indirectly responsible for introducing and selling crack cocaine as

far away as Cleveland, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Dayton and St. Louis...

"Ricky Ross' street connections, ability to obtain cocaine at low prices and deals that allowed him to receive drugs from Contra-CIA operatives with no money upgront helped him to undercut other dealers and quickly spread crack...

"Most of the information surrounding the CIA's involvement in the crack trade came from testimony in the March drug trafficking trial of Mr. Ross, 36, who, along with two other men, were convicted of cocaine conspiracy charges in San Diego...

"Though Mr. Blandon has admitted to crimes that have sent others away for life, the U.S. Justice Department turned him loose on unsupervised probation in 1994 after only 28 months behind bars and has paid him ore than $1666,000 since, court records show.

"Mr. Blandon's boss in the FDN's cocaine operation, Norwin Meneses, has never spent a day in a U.S. prison, even though the federal government has been aware of his cocaine dealings since at least 1974, according to the Mercury News article...

"On Aug. 23, the Los Angeles City Council, responding to pressure by the Los Angeles Chapter of the Black American Political Association of California(BAPAC), asked U.S. Atty. Janet Reno to investigate U.S. government's involvement in the alleged sale of illegal street drugs in Los Angeles' Black community to support the CIA-backed Contras...

"BAPAC, a statewide coalition of political activists, has also demanded that the U.S. government provide the necessary funding, materials and labor to rebuild urban areas destroyed by crack cocaine, as well as the necessary medical care, education, counseling and vocational training to restore shattered lives..."

-from "Secret Ties Between CIA, Drugs Revealed," pages 2 and 7, Sept. 3 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

Africans In U.S. Export De-Africanization Products To Motherland

[Editor's note: In the From Other Sources section of the HARAMBEE FLAME, we prefer to share with you positive information on the activities of our people. Because we are a pan-Africanist publication, we look upon economic exchange between African people in the Americas and African people in Africa as positive. At the same time, however, we recognize that not all commercial enterprises by which our people make money are beneficial for our people generally. In reading the following article and bearing in mind the questions of concepts of physical beauty and media-generated standards for the same, ask yourself to what degree you believe this represents a positive development.]

"Carson Products Company, makers of signature brand Dark & Lovely No-Lye Relaxer, recently listed a public stock offering of its subsidiary, Carson South Africa on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange(JSE). Trading began on July 3.

"The public offering of Carson South Africa comes on the heels of the company's successful acquisition and fully operational 40,000 square foot plant purchased in South Africa in October of last year...

"Keith[Roy Keith, chairman and chief executive officer] also pointed out that the South African facility, which will be utilized as a platform plant for the production for the entire African continent, will enhance Carson's growth potential as an international player in the ethnic hair care industry.

"Currently, international sales account for about 25 percent of Carson's revenue. Within five years, Keith believes that between 45 to 50 percent of Carson's sales will be in international markets..."

-from "Carson Products Company Goes Public In South Africa," page 5 B, Aug. 22 COLUMBUS CALL & POST(Columbus, Ohio)

Organization To Promote Peace In Africa Formed In Tanzania

"An organization known as 'The Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation' has been created in Tanzania for the purpose of promoting peace, unity and people-centered development in Africa.

"According to a recent document, the foundation 'will seek to fulfill those purposes by encouraging necessary organizing dialogues within Africa, among and between governments, peoples, and local institutions'.

"Formally registered in June 1996, the foundation seeks to perpetuate the local and international efforts of Julius Nyerere, the 'Founding Father' of independent Tanganyika, which got its independence on Dec. 9, 1961...

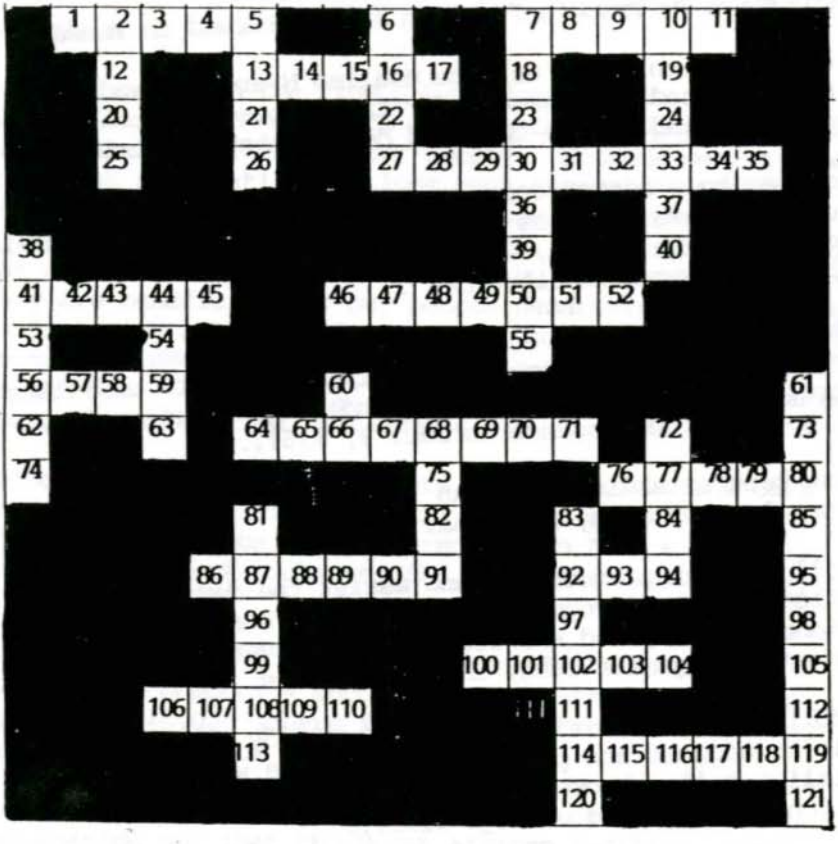
"It has been established as 'an intellectually independent body not linked to any political party'.

"It will initiate, encourage and assist the development of action-oriented proposals based on the sharing of experience, ideas, and knowledge, among governments, non-governmental organizations, and individuals...

"In addition, it will also promote the study of the principles adopted and practiced by Nyerere who introduced a socialist policy known as 'Ujamaa' based on the African traditional family and village life..."

-from "In Pursuit Of Peace," page 14, Sept. 3 THE FINAL CALL

Africentric Crossword Puzzle #12 -Questions



Across

1-Louis Farrakhan, leader of the Nation of Islam was recently prevented by the U.S. government from accepting both a personal humanitarian award and a large grant from the country of _____.

7-"When Black Men Ruled The World" is the first in a series of historical video tapes on Africa by (last name)_____.

13-_____ Shakur was the mother of deceased rapper, Tupac

Shakur, and a former member of the Black Panther Party.

27-The _____ Center in New York City is known for its extensive collection of exhibits dealing with the history of African people.

41-Tabo _____ is the Deputy President of "South Africa."

46-"_____ To The Grassroots" is among the more well-known speeches delivered by Omowale(Malcolm X).

56-The Mbuti people live in a central African _____ forest.

64-Scientists at Thomas Jefferson U. have conducted laboratory tests that have reportedly produced a synthetic _____ to correct the gene mutation that causes sickle cell anemia.

76-_____ is one of about three African nations where it is being alleged that Arab enslavement of Africans is taking place.

86-Nelson _____ is author of SEDUCED, a recently published book on the music industry.

92-NOT _____ OF AFRICA by Mary Lefkowitz is an attempt to discredit the validity of Afrocentricity, particularly with regards to history.

100-Each day of the Kwanzaa observance represents one of _____ principles.

106-The _____ people of Nigeria are at odds with the federal government over the issue of pollution of their environment by oil companies.

114-A graduate of Fisk U. and president of the Nat'l. Urban Coalition, (last name)_____, pushed in 1988 for use of the term, "African American."

Down

2-The _____ are a relatively large ethnic group in Nigeria.

5-The (acronym)_____ is headed by Ben Chavis.

6-THE BEAUTYFUL _____ ARE NOT YET BORN is an early novel by Ayi Kwei Armah.

7-The tendency of some Africans in this country to prefer to

follow Caucasian leadership and/or seek Caucasian approval or support in trying to address problems in our communities can be an example of "_____-subject mentality."

10-The "black market" is commonly associated with what is referred to as the "under-_____ economy."

38-This news magazine, _____, is a subsidiary of Black Entertainment Television.

44-Congressman (last name)_____ is the most outspoken congressional opponent of the Nation of Islam.

60-"Big _____" is the nickname for this flamboyant preacher/political activist in New York City who recently announced that he is a candidate for the office of mayor.

61-"Five O'Clock In The Morning" is by the female rapper, "_____."

68-_____ paintings in northern Africa depict the Sahara during a period when it was grassland and teeming with wildlife.

72-"If We _____ Die is a poem dealing with our struggle for freedom and was written by Claude McCay.

81-Bernice _____ is head of the Washington, D.C.-based singing group, Sweet Honey In The Rock.

83-"Koevoet" is the name of the counter-insurgency force run by the government of South Africa in its efforts to prevent the achievement of independence by what was known then as "Southwest Africa."

COMMUNITY NEWS

On the evening of September 17th., the prison chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization had its annual fall symposium. This year's program focused on the issue of African-on-African violence in U.S. communities. The program began, as all our programs do, with pouring of libation and recitation of our organization creed and the nguzo saba(seven principles) of kawaida. Our guest speaker was James Conyers, Chairman of the U.N.O. Black Studies Department. He spoke on several issues related to African-on-African violence, its causes, etc. A good portion of his address dealt with the importance of fathers being present for their children and establishing models for them. Following his remarks, there were questions from our members and guests, which covered such areas as: causes of self-hatred among young African males, what we can do to solve the problem of physical abuse of African girls and women, the role of education in the forming of consciousness, etc.

There were also brief addresses on the issue of African-on-African violence delivered by members Ptah and Ed Harvey. Two musical groups, comprised of organization members and non-members, performed. All Is Well Peoples performed a number decrying African-on-African violence and calling on us to unify. The other group, Generation Bridge, did a piece entitled "Rising Song," written as a kind of pan-African anthem. We wish to thank all of those who participated in our program. Special thanks to Brother Conyers for taking his time to address our members and guests.

BACK IN TIME

European settlers had been arriving in the country since 1896. But it was during the period when Charles Eliot was Commissioner that the first official encouragement was given to white settlement. From about 1904 settlers began to arrive from South Africa. This was the first of several government-sponsored European settlement schemes that were to be a marked feature of Kenya history. They were soon followed by other immigrants from Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada who, on the whole, brought more capital than their predecessors.

The new colonists were inspired by a dream. Since most of Asia, America and Africa was already explored, the highlands of Kenya appeared to be the only suitable area left for European colonisation. Kenya was the last of the typically British settlements estalished overseas, after the the U.S.A., Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. To quote the words of one of these early colonists, 'the goal of this generation is the establishment in East Africa of a new, loyal, white dominion, securely founded in the principles of British tradition and western civilisation'...Any attempt to turn this European dream into a reality was bound to run into several difficulties...

...Europeans who felt superior to the Africans were unlikelh to agree to do manual work in a country inhabited largely by Africans. The natural role of most of them working on the land, they felt, should be that of supervisors of African labour. Conscious of their status they hoped that a poor white residuum would not appear, as had happened in South Africa. A class of poor whites, they feared, would pave the way to miscegenation, which in return would result in a debasement of racial standards.

Source: ZAMANI: A SURVEY OF EAST AFRICAN HISTORY, Edited by BA Ogot; Chapter 13, "Kenya Under the British: 1895-1963

If your brother busts you in the grill, is it made cool by the fact that your enemy busts you in the grill too? Let's get real.

If an African rapper, or any other kind of performer, produces work that promotes respect among our people, that helps to open our eyes to the reality of our situation, that heightens our courage to fight against bondage, we have to support that Brother or Sister, have to give that rapper his or her props. But if an African rapper, or other performer, produces work that promotes our dissin' ourselves and each other, that helps keep us blind, that moves us to assist in our own bondage, that rapper is an agent of our oppression.

-Editor

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Kemetic Benu Order Inc. and The Institute of African Diaspora Research & Culture is hosting its 3rd annual African Ancestor Festival, also called the Akwasidae Festival, Oct. 5 The Kemetic Order is the first Afrocentric co-ed fraternity in the U.S., founded at North Carolina State in 1987. The festival will be held 10 a.m. to dusk at the Harris Field on the N.C. State campus in Raleigh, N.C. The theme is Unity, Heritage, Community Development, Atonement and Spirituality. For more information, call (919) 383-5941.

The 1996 Minority Health Conference will be held at the Cornhusker Hotel, 333 South 13th. Street in Lincoln, Nebraska and will build on the 1995 conference outcomes by focusing on priority areas that affect the health status of racial/ethnic minorities in Nebraska. Conference speakers will discuss many of these areas so that participants will more fully understand the issues. Participants will have the opportunity to take part in round-table planning sessions. A report will be delivered to policy makers. Among the issues to be discussed: cross-cultural medicine, interplay between culture and mental health, life's learning road to positive health: American Indian practices, African American culture and impact on health services, searching for racial/ethnic minority health care professionals, etc. For additional information, contact Rita Parris at (402) 471-2337.

Upcoming meetings of the state prison chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization: Sat. Sept. 28, Tue. Oct. 1, Sat. Oct. 12, Tue. Oct. 15, Sat. Oct. 26, Tue. Oct. 29. Saturday meetings run from 1 to 3 p.m. Tuesday meetings run from 6 to 8 p.m. We encourage participation by Brothers and Sisters from Lincoln and Omaha's African communities in our programs. Write to us at P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, Ne.; 68542-2500. Or call 471-3161 and ask for ext. 3380. Call between 1 and 2:45 p.m., Monday through Friday.